Messianic Simcha (Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah)

What is a Messianic Bar or Bat Mitzvah? Literally it means a son or daughter of the commandments. Under Jewish law a child is not required to follow all of the commandments of the Torah until they reach the age of accountability. When a girl reaches the age of 12 or a boy reaches the age of 13 they are formally required to observe all of the commandments that is incumbent upon an adult Jewish man or women. The Bar or Bat mitzvah ceremony formally marks the assumption of that obligation, along with the corresponding right to take part in leading religious services, to count in a minyan, to form binding contracts, and to testify before religious courts. We will continue to encourage this most beautiful life cycle events for our children in the traditional fashion. It is the opinion of the Elders that we would also encourage our adults congregants who have not experienced a Bar or Bat Mitzvah to do likewise as the Spirit leads them. For the former gentile this celebration is of special significance as it testifies to a new way of life.

All Messianics, whether Jewish or not, are unified as one new creation of G-D through their faith in Messiah Yeshua. This takes care of the spiritual connection, but there remains the need for many Messianic non-Jews to obtain people-hood in the earth. People-hood provides culture, which comes from a shared heritage, history, trouble and glory. This leaves many Messianics feeling as if they are only associate members of a community and never fully being identified within the body of Israel. There is no doubt that this debate over identity will continue until the glorious return of our King. There are few, if any, Messianic communities who have not been impacted with this issue. We must do our best to help calm these turbulent waters within our own communities and provide a way for former Gentiles to feel fully part of the Messianic community and equal members within the commonwealth of Israel.

There is also a need for a statement of life transition. This is done through a Bar or Bat Mitzvah when a child reaches the age of accountability and expresses their desire to be a son or daughter of the commandments apart from their parents covering. Apart from their wedding day this is often times the most celebrated event in the life of a Jew. It is our hope to draw from this life changing event and a build a deep and meaningful expression for adult individuals who seek a deeper identity in the Jewish Messiah. To emphasize its unique expression we have codenamed our adult Bar and Bat Mitzvah’s “simcha”.

What is a simcha? Simcha simply means joy or celebration. A Messianic Simcha is a celebration of the Jewish way of life in Messiah Yeshua.
Formal Requirements

- The candidate must demonstrate a commitment to following Yeshua as their personal savior and the Messiah of Israel.
- The candidate must be actively participating in a Messianic Jewish Synagogue.
- The candidate must show ability to perform major Hebrew blessings.
- The candidate must demonstrate a commitment to following the community halakah.
- The candidate must present the following works to the spiritual leader or overseeing elder before the formal celebration.

1. Write a short 1-2 page paper on why this simcha process is important to you.

2. Complete a beginner’s Hebrew class or equivalent study and demonstrate the ability to read Hebrew.

3. Demonstrate a foundational knowledge of the Jewish prayers. This will involve encouragement and guidance from the spiritual leader and the congregational elders.

4. Demonstrate a commitment to raising your children in a Messiah centered Jewish way. This will involve encouragement and guidance from the spiritual leader and congregational elders.

5. Write a short essay on 3 of the following topics (1 page typed 2 page hand written minimum).
   - What are the blessings of following the Torah of Moses?
   - What does it mean to be a Jewish man of Torah?
   - How to run a Jewish household.
   - Raising Jewish Children.
   - Jewish prayer.
   - Kevra Kaddishah.
   - Why we keep the Sabbath.
   - The importance of Community.
   - A short biography on one of the ancient Torah sages.
   - A short biography on one of the pioneers of modern Messianic Judaism.
   - What does it mean to be a disciple of Yeshua?
   - The intercession of Yeshua.
   - The inclusion of the gentiles amongst the promises of Israel.
   - Explain how lashon harah is an affront to the holiness of G-D.
   - The four methods of Jewish interpretation of Scriptures.
   - The laws of Niddah.
   - The laws of Tefillin.
   - The laws of Kashrut.
   - Explain the relevance of immersion in the Jewish life.
   - Any of the annual Appointed Times.
   - Book report on any of the books listed below
   - You may choose another topic but it must be approved by the Rabbi.
6. Required Reading
   - G-D’s Appointed Times by Barney Kasdan
   - G-D’s Appointed Customs by Barney Kasdan

7. Complete 12 credit hours of study at Da’at Hashem Hebrew Academy. Equivalent transfer credit hours will be considered on a case by case basis.

Final completion will result in a Hebrew name, certificate of completion, a Synagogue Chumash, and a great simcha.